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**Festschrift For H. A. Drake (R.M.) Frakes, (E.) Depalma Digeser, (J.) Stephens (edd.) *The Rhetoric of Power in Late Antiquity. Religion and Politics in Byzantium, Europe and the Early Islamic World.* (Library of Classical Studies 2.) Pp. xii + 287, pl. London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010. Cased, £65. ISBN: 978-1-84885-409-3.**

Andrew Marsham

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and finally by Howard-Johnston, who gives a wonderfully lively, exhilarating and insightful overview of the ways in which the superpowers of Byzantium and Iran interacted with each other and with the lesser polities around them in the course of the fifth to seventh centuries.

This volume does, then, reflect well the scholarly versatility of Zeev Rubin. The one topic that is missing, and that he worked on a lot in the last decade of his life, is the preservation of the Sasanian national history in Muslim Arabic sources (see in particular his articles in *JSAI* 2005 and 2008 listed on pages 410–11). Here we have to content ourselves with Whitby's thoughtful assessment of the pre-Jesus section of the universal history of Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 932), especially as regards his approach to truth and time, which, even if dealing with pre-Sasanian and non-Iranian history, does at least pay attention to a source that Zeev himself used and wrote about on a number of occasions (see his 'Al-Tabari and the Age of the Sasanians' in H. Kennedy [ed.], *Al-Tabari: a Medieval Muslim Historian and his Work* [2008], pp. 41–71).

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#### FESTSCHRIFT FOR H. A. DRAKE

FRAKES (R.M.), DEPALMA DIGESER (E.), STEPHENS (J.) (edd.)  
*The Rhetoric of Power in Late Antiquity. Religion and Politics in Byzantium, Europe and the Early Islamic World.* (Library of Classical Studies 2.) Pp. xii + 287, pl. London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010. Cased, £65. ISBN: 978-1-84885-409-3.

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This volume of twelve articles on religion, politics, philosophy and historiography in Late Antiquity is dedicated by its Editors to H.A. Drake, who worked at the University of California Santa Barbara from 1971 until 2008. Now formally retired, Drake continues to work on many aspects of Late Antiquity, notably the transformations wrought in the later Roman Empire by the conversion of Constantine to Christianity. For Drake this pivotal episode is best understood as an exercise in political integration. It was an attempt to bolster political authority through Christian religion, while appealing to the diverse constituencies of the empire by exploiting the extensive common ground between early fourth-century pagans and Christians. The importance of the common ground between paganism and Christianity upon which this integrative imperial rhetoric depended has, Drake argues, been obscured by a rhetoric of conflict between the two, largely generated by Christian writers of the fourth century and after.

As one might expect, the majority of the pieces in the volume focus on the third-, fourth- and fifth-century Roman empire. However, the collection has a wide geographical and chronological range, touching in one article upon sixth-century Ireland, as remembered in a late eighth-century saint's life, and upon events in seventh-century Syria, as remembered in eighth- and ninth-century Islamic traditions, in another. The final article discusses attitudes to the historical truth of the Hebrew Bible in Antiquity and in Early Modern Europe.

The Editors have grouped the pieces under four rubrics. As usual in a Festschrift, one or two of the pieces strain these parameters, but for the most part they work fairly well.

Part 1, 'The Image of Political and Episcopal Authority', focusses on the fourth and fifth centuries in four articles – on the representation of Julian in Ammianus (Fournier), on the causes of the massacre in Thessalonica in 390 as recorded in Sozomen (Frakes), on Attila's retreat from Italy in 452 (Blodgett), and on Ambrose's self-representation of his role at the court of Maximus in 383 and 386 (Proulx). Three are explicitly concerned with the representation of authority in texts. (Blodgett is the exception, in that his focus is more positivist – bravely attempting to recover Attila's motives and the political ideology of the Huns.) These essays tread a delicate path between recognition of the highly rhetorical quality of the source material and a desire to recover 'what really happened'. On the same page, Fournier admits that whether the citizens of Sirmium 'welcomed Julian with a formal *adventus* it is impossible to know', while nevertheless contending that 'there are enough indications to support the gist of Ammianus' description of Julian's arrival in Sirmium' (p. 14). In the second essay, Frakes' conclusion that 'to a non-Christian writer an emperor punishing his own citizens for killing a general might simply have been business as usual' (p. 53) is a little dubious – perhaps rather it was 'business as usual' for both Christians and non-Christians, but for the latter the riot had *significance*, because it had become a *lieu de mémoire* for other things, especially ideas about Ambrose and episcopal power. Proulx stays with Ambrose, and is perhaps the happiest of the four to accept the purely rhetorical quality of his source material, arguing that Ambrose deliberately represented himself as a paternal protector of orphans, including Gratian and Valentinian, in order to distance himself from association with Maximus.

The two essays in Part 2, 'The Function of Roman Tradition in Emergent Societies', look to the geographical and chronological margins of the Roman world while placing an even greater emphasis on the importance of the literary qualities of our sources. Tschen Emmons' piece on the *Life of Áed* observes a specific example of how the idea of the desert was transposed from the traditions about the first Egyptian eremites to the landscape of Ireland, Christianising the way that the Irish landscape was understood. (Here it is worth noting a 2009 edited volume by Y. Codou and M. Lauwers, where a paper by J.-M. Picard addresses similar themes.)

It is very sad to note that the other piece in this section, by T. Sizgorich, is another reminder, if any were needed, of what a loss was caused by Sizgorich's tragically early death in January 2011. '“Your brothers, the Romans”: Early Islamic History as a Turn of the Classical Page in Early Muslim Thought and Literature' is a characteristically lively and perceptive discussion which asks how the Muslim tradition explained conflict between the Arabs and the Romans while also remembering the two as kin (via Ishmael and Esau respectively) with a shared monotheist tradition. The answer, Sizgorich contends, was to be found in the Muslims' memory of Roman imperial arrogance in the face of the humble piety of their Arab conquerors, neatly illustrated by the encounter between the Arab commander Khalid ibn al-Walid and the Roman general Bahan.

Part 3 turns to 'Civic Elites in the Byzantine East', with an essay on the *Life of Daniel the Stylite* (Raub Vivian) and two pieces on early sixth-century Gazans, Timotheus and Choricus (by Frost and Mazza respectively). Raub Vivian uses the *Life of Daniel* to make some observations on the continuing importance of the idea of the 'holy man' in Late Antiquity.

The two pieces on the Gazans are placed together with a short introduction, presumably composed by the Editors. This is one occasion where the judicious tone of the collection slips. Modern Gaza is described as ‘crushed between the ancestral hatreds of two Stone Age religions’, which seems to misrepresent the current tragedy as some inevitable consequence of ‘primitive’ religion. Happily, the essays themselves avoid such infelicities. Frost provides a short but entertaining discussion of animal imagery in mosaics and literature, before Mazza’s long and substantial piece on Choricus’ *Oration* 13, which nicely sets out both the role of provincial rituals in ‘building a shared identity’ in Justinian’s empire, and the reinvention of the form and meaning of these rituals in the Christianising context of Justinian’s reign.

The fourth and final section, ‘Addressing Challenges to Sacred Texts and Rites’, includes two pieces on Origen (DePalma Digeser and Marx-Wolf), together with Sonnino’s piece on ideas about the authorship of the Pentateuch. Both essays on Origen address Drake’s arguments about the shared cultures of paganism and monotheism; DePalma Digeser argues, in support of Böhm, that fourth-century polemic has resulted in the false impression that there were two Origenes, one a Hellenic philosopher and another a Christian; Marx-Wolf points out a shared culture of daemonology among pagans and Christians through a study of Origen, Porphyry and Iamblichus. Finally, Sonnino turns to sweeping comparative intellectual history, contrasting antique veneration for tradition with the critical scepticism of Mersenne, Hobbes and others in seventeenth-century Europe.

The four sections are framed by a foreword, introduction and conclusion. The foreword, by John W.I. Lee, is about Drake himself. The introduction and conclusion are by the Editors, framing the twelve essays with summaries of Drake’s ideas about paganism and Christianity in Late Antiquity. In this they have done a sound job, as they have, alongside the press, in editing the text, in which there are comparatively few typographical errors. The only major *desideratum* is a more comprehensive index – it is limited to the names of people only.

It is in the nature of Festschriften to be a little diffuse in focus, and this is true of this collection to some extent. However, the scope of the volume is testament to the important influence of Drake on a wide range of aspects of late antique studies in the United States and further afield. The sincere and warm regard of the scholars involved for Drake’s erudition, pedagogy and humanity is evident throughout.

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## ROMAN SOCIAL RELATIONS

PEACHIN (M.) (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World*. Pp. xvi + 738, figs, ill. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Cased, £95, US\$150. ISBN: 978-0-19-518800-4.  
doi:10.1017/S0009840X12001126

The study of Roman social history is a vast field with manifold and controversial topics and approaches. To publish an authoritative handbook that provides ‘everything you need to know’ is a highly ambitious task. This volume aims to